

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION PM-03

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 IO-10 ACDA-05 CIAE-00 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 EB-07 OES-03 FEA-01 ERDA-05 SS-15 /070 W
----- 021460

R 130133Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9331

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

SECDEF WASHDC

S E C R E T WELLINGTON 0670

NOFORN

CANBERRA FOR DEPSECDEF CLEMENTS

SECDEF FOR ISA

EO 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: MILI, PFOR, AS, NZ

SUBJECT: SOUTH PACIFIC NUCLEAR FREE ZONE (SPNFZ)

1. SUMMARY- EMBASSY HAS BEEN INFORMED OF GNZ INITIATIVE TO REFLOAT SPNFZ. GNZ HAS PRESENTED AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT WITH PROPOSAL WHICH GNZ HOPES WILL BE DISCUSSED DURING UPCOMING ROWLING-WHITLAM TALKS. SOURCE INDICATED THAT IF GOA AGREED WITH PROPOSAL, GNZ WOULD PROBABLY BRING SUBJECT UP FOR PUBLIC DISCUSSION AND MIGHT INTRODUCE IT AT NEXT UNGA SESSION. END SUMMARY.

2. ON MARCH 12 EMBOFF WAS SHOWN COPY OF HIGHLY CLASSIFIED GNZ PROPOSAL CONCERNING SPNFZ. ACCORDING TO SOURCE, PROPOSAL WAS PRESENTED TO GOA DURING WEEK OF MARCH 3. GOA HAS BEEN ASKED TO STUDY PROPOSAL WITH THE EXPECTATION THAT IT WILL BE DISCUSSED AT THE MARCH 23-25 TALKS BETWEEN PRIME MINISTERS ROWLING AND WHITLAM. ASSUMING GOA ACCEPTANCE OF PLAN, SOURCE SAID GNZ WOULD THEN TRY IT OUT ON SOME OF ITS OTHER SOUTH PACIFIC NEIGHBORS WITH THE OBJECTIVE
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OF OBTAINING SUPPORT FOR POSSIBLE INTRODUCTION OF THE

ISSUE AT THIS YEAR'S UNGA.

3. EMBOFF WAS ALLOWED ONLY BRIEF LOOK AT DOCUMENT. MAJOR POINT IN GNZ PLAN IS THAT SPNFZ WOULD BAR NUCLEAR WEAPONS FROM LAND AREAS AND TERRITORIAL WATERS OF SIGNATORY POWERS. GNZ NOTED THAT NO NUCLEAR WEAPONS NOW DEPLOYED IN SOUTH PACIFIC AND ITS PLAN, THEREFORE, SHOULD CAUSE NO MAJOR PROBLEMS FOR NUCLEAR POWERS. IN CASE OF NUCLEAR ATTACK, ALLIES (READ USG) OF SIGNATORY NATIONS WOULD BE FREE TO COME TO THEIR AID WITH NUCLEAR WEAPONS. GNZ ASSUMES THAT IN CASE OF CONFLICT INVOLVING CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS ONLY, ALLIES WOULD NOT WISH TO RESPOND WITH NUCLEAR WEAPONS, ERGO, A PROHIBITION OF FIRST USE WOULD NOT CAUSE US ANY PROBLEMS. IN PROPOSAL GNZ REAFFIRMS RELIANCE ON ANZUS.

4. SOURCE INDICATED HE THOUGHT GOA FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENSE OFFICIALS REMAINED OPPOSED TO SPNFZ BUT ALLOWED FOR POSSIBILITY THAT PROPOSAL MIGHT FIND SOME ACCEPTABILITY AT CABINET LEVEL. SUGGESTED LIKELY OUTCOME OF ROWLING-WHITLAM TALKS WOULD BE TO REFER AGREEMENT TO APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

5.. COMMENT- DEPARTMENT AND CANBERRA WILL BE AWARE THAT SPNFZ WAS FAVORITE ISSUE FOR PRIME MINISTER KIRK. GENERAL ASSUMPTION HAD BEEN THAT PLAN WAS BURIED WITH HIM. TWO EXPLANATIONS ARE OFFERED FOR ITS RESURRECTION AT THIS TIME. FIRST, IT MAY BE A POLITICAL PLOY BY PM ROWLING, TO SATISFY THE LEFT WING OF THE LABOUR PARTY. IF THIS IS THE CASE THEN THE GNZ EXPECTS LITTLE OF IT AND WOULD BE QUITE WILLING TO SEE IT DISCUSSED BY OFFICIALS MORE OR LESS AD INFINITUM. THE SECOND, AND MUCH MORE SERIOUS POSSIBLE REASON FOR THE ISSUE TO BE RAISED AGAIN AT THIS TIME IS A CONCERTED EFFORT BY LABOUR'S LEFT TO NEGATE BOTH ANZUS AND THE EFFECTS OF THE RECENT US LEGISLATION ACCEPTING TOTAL LIABILITY IN THE CASE OF NPW REACTOR ACCIDENTS. BY INCLUDING TERRITORIAL WATERS IN ITS PROPOSAL, THE GNZ LEAVES OPEN THE POSSIBILITY OF REQUIRING THE USG TO CERTIFY THAT ITS VESSELS ARE NOT CARRYING NUCLEAR WEAPONS. LEFT IS WELL AWARE THAT SUCH A REQUIREMENT WOULD EFFECTIVELY DETER US SHIP VISITS.

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6. ACTION REQUESTED: WITHOUT INDICATING US KNOWLEDGE OF LATEST GNZ PROPOSAL, EMBASSY BELIEVES DEPSECDEF CLEMENTS SHOULD FIRMLY IMPRESS UPON GOA OUR OPPOSITION TO SPNFZ. ISSUE SHOULD ALSO BE DISCUSSED DURING MR CLEMENTS VISIT TO WELLINGTON.
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Message Attributes

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